

Burlington Planning Commission

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Burlington Planning Commission Long Range Planning Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, September 29, 2015 @ noon
Planning & Zoning Office, Ground Floor, City Hall

Present: H. Roen, J. Wallace-Brodeur, AJ LaRosa, and E. Lee.

1. Agenda

Purpose of the meeting is to ID major issues in draft for more detailed conversation by the Commission as a whole at subsequent meetings.

2. planBTV: South End Master Plan

C. Norris-Brown: Appears that housing is off the table for now. Focus of the plan should be on advancing the creative economy, and combining STEM with design. Would like a high-level steering committee to look at potential and opportunities.

C. Bates: Agrees. Parking strategy downtown approach is a good model to focus efforts and strategies. Should also look at C Parkway and how its construction could disrupt evolution of Pine Street. Better to have a park 'n ride served by busses to downtown.

G. Grill: Who is/was responsible for overseeing the process? Many issues were raised but not addressed. How do public comments get tabulated and considered? The Commission was not actively engaged until now. Also needed to make sure that all important stakeholders are engaged. Schools are one example. Finally, need to educate the public about the pros and cons of some of the ideas put forward so people's ideas are informed.

A. Radcliffe: Experience of people participating in the process did not match the words used to describe it. How much weight does the public input actually have? Many responses came across as dismissive, and little action has been taken to change.

J. Lockridge: What role does the Mayor have in this conversation and how much does he drive the agenda? A collaborative spirit is necessary as is taking the time to educate the public on the process and the issues and ideas.

A. Radcliffe: No real discuss of the pro and cons and a willingness to get into the substance and details of the issues. Isn't that what the public process should be all about.

T. Reddington: No report or study has been made available to the public regarding the pros and cons of the parkway. Last public discussion was in 2006. A better model is the information available on the North Ave Corridor Plan and the public process. Is there a content analysis of the comments offered, and how have they been considered?

J Wallace-Brodeur: It would have been a mistake NOT to consider housing given how significant an issue it is to the community. Efforts to try to address housing needs in the city – and particularly affordable housing – are a priority.

E. Lee: Housing has been part of the conversation from the very beginning and the plan's representation accurately reflects the broader dialogue in the community. People she has heard are largely split. It is not as one sided as it might appear.

A. Radcliffe: Really tried to make a distinction between housing in the Enterprise district vs elsewhere in the south end. Housing crisis is about affordability, so we need to work with developers to understand how we can build the housing that we actually need.

A. LaRosa – Should now look at the stormwater recommendations in light of the new TMDL. And now that we gotten new people to the table talking about the south end there needs to be a vehicle that continues the conversation. Consider formatting the plan in such a way that looks at the two south ends – inside and outside of the Enterprise district.

A. Radcliffe: Would like to see a series of intensive working meetings to get into the details and learn specifically about how development actually happens. How do we keep the south end from turning into Church Street and stem gentrification? Zero Gravity is a good example of the growing problem of gentrification and conflicts between land uses. Local is important.

H. Roen: Housing and Champlain Parkway are obviously key issues for the Commission's discussion, but what else? Barge Canal, stormwater, dead-end of Pine Street, how to continue and maintain ongoing engagement

J. Lockridge: Many opportunities to educate community about the many issues and challenges as a precursor to a more meaningful conversation. Create literacy and encourage means for active and meaningful engagement.

R. Hilliard: Is this experience in the south end a metaphor for the rest of the city? The PC used to meet in different wards to bring the process closer to the neighborhoods. May want to return to those types of meetings.

I. Avilix: A letter in the beginning from the Commission itself to led its voice and setting the stage for implementation.

G. Grill: How do individuals participate vs. organizations?

3. Adjourn – 1:25pm